

Remarks:

Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 1, 3-9, 11 and 15 remain in the application. Claims 1, 3-9, 11 and 15 have been amended. Claims 2, 10, 12-14 and 16-17 have been cancelled.

In the section entitled "Specification" on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, the specification has been objected to because of an informality. Appropriate correction has been made.

In the section entitled "Drawings" on page 2 of the above-identified Office action, the drawings have been objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) as not showing every feature of the invention specified in the claims.

More specifically, the Examiner has stated that the printed and flat products, cards etc. must be shown or the feature(s) cancelled from the claim(s). The Examiner has also stated that items 114 and 112 have been both referred to as stops even though 114 appears to point to a fixing screw. Fig. 1 has been amended to show the flat products 5 and the reference sign 114 has been changed to refer to stops provided on the transport chain 16.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112" on pages 2-3 of the above-identified Office action, claims 2 and 9-17 have been rejected as being indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112 second paragraph.

More specifically, the Examiner has stated that it is not clear whether claim 2 is drawn to the combination of the feeder and one or more processing machines or to the feeder alone. Claim 2 has been cancelled.

The Examiner has also stated that the scope of claims 9-17 cannot be determined since the preamble recite specific types of apparatus, while the claims do not set forth the structures related to or able to perform the functions of the particular apparatus.

Claim 9 has been amended to recite a collating device having feeders and a conveyor charged with flat products by the feeders, in which at least one feeder is detachably assigned to the conveyor. Claims 11 and 15 are dependent on claim 9. Claims 10, 12-14 and 16-17 have been cancelled.

It is accordingly believed that the claims meet the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. Should the Examiner find any further objectionable items, counsel would appreciate a telephone call during which the matter may be

resolved. The above-noted changes to the claims are provided solely for cosmetic and/or clarificatory reasons. The changes are neither provided for overcoming the prior art nor do they narrow the scope of the claims for any reason related to the statutory requirements for a patent.

In the section entitled "Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102" on pages 3-5 of the above-mentioned Office action, claims 1-17 have been rejected as being anticipated by Moll (US Pat. No. 5,732,941) under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

The rejection has been noted and claims 1 and 9 have been amended in an effort to even more clearly define the invention of the instant application. The changes are clearly shown in the Drawings and supported by the specification.

Before discussing the prior art in detail, it is believed that a brief review of the invention as claimed, would be helpful.

Claim 1 calls for, inter alia:

at least one feeder; and

a conveyor operatively charged with the flat products by said feeder;

said feeder being detachably assigned to said conveyor in a working position.

Claim 9 calls for, inter alia:

feeders disposed at respective working positions;

a conveyor operatively charged with flat printed products by said feeders;

at least one of said feeders being detachably assigned to said conveyor.

Moll discloses a device having a feeder and a conveyor fed with flat products whereby the feeder and the conveyor form a single component. However, Moll does not disclose that at least one feeder is detachably assigned to the conveyor in a working position. Furthermore, Moll also does not provide any hint toward forming a device for processing flat products in which the feeder can be detachably assigned to the conveyor.

Clearly, Moll does not show the feeder "being detachably assigned to said conveyor", as recited in claims 1 and 9 of the instant application.

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new
limitations

Claims 1 and 9 are, therefore, believed to be patentable over Moll and since all of the dependent claims are ultimately dependent on claims 1 or 9, they are believed to be patentable as well.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1, 3-9, 11 and 15 are solicited.

In the event the Examiner should still find any of the claims to be unpatentable, counsel would appreciate a telephone call so that, if possible, patentable language can be worked out.

Petition for extension is herewith made. The extension fee for response within a period of one month pursuant to Section 1.136(a) in the amount of \$110.00 in accordance with Section 1.17 is enclosed herewith.

Please charge any fees which might be due with respect to Sections 1.16 and 1.17 to the Deposit Account of Lerner and Greenberg, P.A., No. 12-1099.

Respectfully submitted,


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Marked-Up Version of the Amended Paragraphs in the
Specification and Marked-Up Version of the Amended Claims:

The paragraph starting on page 6, line 6 and ending on
page 6, line 23 now reads as:

With feeders of this type, or with a system of mobile feeders,
it is possible for the printed-product processing machine to
be changed over in a short time and without particular
specialist knowledge. There is now the possibility of
interchanging various types of feeders for folded sheets, flat
sheets, cards or the like. It is likewise possible to bring
up and to position the feeders from both sides to the axis
defined by the transport device. Depending on the
requirement, a feeder area of various types of feeders and
with a variable number of feeders, which are positioned from
the right and from the left with respect to the transport
device, can be put together. Feeders can now also be used [in
parallel] for different and various types of installations or
machines, by being interchanged simply between the
installations. In the event of maintenance and service
requirements, the respective feeder can be replaced simply and
quickly. Maintenance, repair or a test run can be carried out
without any connection to the entire installation.

The paragraph starting on page 10, line 18 and ending on
page 11, line 20 now reads as:

Fig. 1 shows the feeder area of the gatherer stitcher or of the collating machine. This is a mobile feeder. For example, shown here is a system of three feeders 10 over the transport device 12. Arrows A indicate a transport direction of flat products 5. Shown here as a specific topology is the exemplary configuration in which two of the feeders 10 are positioned from the right, and one feeder 10 is positioned from the left, with respect to an axis defined by the transport device 12. In principle the feeders 10 can be brought up to the transport device 12 in various configurations from both sides, that is to say also for example all from one side. The transport device 12 has a gathering chain 14, which is borne by transport chain frames 16. In principle, the position of the feeders 10 in relation to the transport chain can be chosen freely. However, it is advantageous during operation to fix the apparatus that ensures mobility of the feeders 10 and to fix the position of the latter. The feeders 10 each have a feeder superstructure 18 and a subframe 110, which is brought up to the gathering chain 14 in such a way that the subframe 110 is located partly under the gathering chain 14. In an advantageous development of the invention, as shown here in Fig. 1, stops 112 are provided on the subframe 110, so that positioning the feeders 10 in relation to the transport device 12 simply and without difficulty is made easier. Stops 114 are advantageously

likewise provided on the transport chain frame 16. During operation, wheels 118 of the feeders 10 can be fixed by fixing screws 116. In other words, the feeders 10 have a simple mechanism to ensure their mobility, but can be rendered immobile for operation.

The paragraph starting on page 12, line 6 and ending on page 12, line 15 now reads as:

Fig. 3 shows a cover folding feeder such as can be used for flat sheets, for example. A feeder superstructure 30 rests on a subframe 32 as a supporting device, the two parts of the mobile feeder forming a module and being separable from each other. The subframe 32 can be moved with the aid of wheels 33. Setting screws 34 are used to fix it in position along an axis of the transport device 12 during operation. For precise positioning, guides [34] 35 and stops 36 are provided. The feeder superstructure 30 has a separating apparatus 40 for separating the flat sheets.

Claim 1(amended). [A feeder for separating and feeding flat products, including feeding folded sheets, flat sheets, and cards, to printed-product processing machines, including gatherer stitchers, collating machines and inserting machines, the feeder comprising:

a feeder superstructure; and

an apparatus attached to said feeder superstructure for ensuring mobility of said feeder superstructure] A processing device for flat products, comprising:

at least one feeder; and

a conveyor operatively charged with the flat products by said feeder;

said feeder being detachably connected to said conveyor in a working position.

Claim 3(amended). The [feeder] processing device according to claim 1, wherein said [apparatus has one of wheels and rollers] feeder is mobile.

Claim 4(amended). The [feeder] processing device according to claim 1, wherein [said apparatus which ensures the mobility can fix said feeder superstructure in place] feeder includes fixing means for arresting said feeder at least in said working position.

Claim 5(amended). The [feeder] processing device according to claim 1, wherein said feeder forms a modular unit including a superstructure and [said apparatus form a modular unit] a subframe carrying said superstructure.

Claim 6(amended). The [feeder] processing device according to claim [1] 5, wherein said [feeder] superstructure has a separating apparatus, and said [apparatus that ensures the mobility has a] subframe [attached to said superstructure] is equipped with one of rollers and wheels disposed to render said feeder mobile.

Claim 7(amended). The [feeder] processing device according to claim [6] 5, wherein said subframe has guides and stops for positioning said feeder in said working position.

Claim 8(amended). [A transport] The processing device [for printed products, comprising:] according to claim 1, wherein said conveyor has

[a frame; and]

stops [disposed on said frame] for positioning said [fixing mobile feeders] feeder in said working position.

Claim 9(amended). A [system for] collating device for flat printed products, [including folded sheets, flat sheets, and cards, the system] comprising:

feeders disposed at respective working positions;

a [transport device for gathering the] conveyor operatively charged with the flat printed products by said feeders; [and

a supporting device supporting a least one of said feeders, said supporting device supporting said] at least one of said feeders [forming a module being independent of said transport device] being detachably connected to said conveyor.

Claim 11(amended). The [system for] collating device for printed products according to claim 9, wherein said [module has an apparatus which ensures mobility of said] at least one of said feeders is mobile.

Claim 15(amended). [A] The collating [machine] device according to claim 9, [comprising:

a transport device for transporting printed products, containing:

a frame; and] wherein said conveyor has

stops [disposed on said frame for fixing mobile feeders]
for positioning said at least one of said feeders in a
respective one of said working positions.